THE EPILOGUE,

Spoke by Miſs BRET.

THE Buſ'neſs of an Epilogue's t' accuſe ye,
And, when we've took your Money, to abuſe ye;
But this ſtrange Author ſays that in our Age
There is no Room for Satire on the Stage.
In Times like theſe, when all Corruption's dead,
And the Stream's pure e'en from the Fountain-head,
In ſuch an Age, free from Exceſs of Gaming,
When none are Bubbles, who are worth our naming,
When none are hurt by Promiſes delay'd,
And none by Harlots, none by Friends, betray'd,
In theſe our upright, theſe our golden Times,
Who fears the Laſh of Proſe or wicked Rhymes?
The Courtier ſure, who ſcorns to do what's wrong,
Can never tremble at a harmleſs Song;
When Penſion's nam'd, if any one's in Pain,
He is no Machiavel *that will complain:*
Let therefore, when Satire is ſay'd or ſung,
The gall'd Jade winch, our Withers are unwrung.

642.i.5.
5.

THE

Mournful Nuptials,

OR

Love the Cure of all Woes,

A

TRAGEDY.

To which is prefixed a PREFACE, containing some Observations on SATIRE, and on the present State of our public Entertainments.

By Mr. *COOKE.*

LONDON:
Printed for T. COOPER, in *Pater-Noster-Row.*
M.DCC.XXXIX.
(Price One Shilling and Six Pence.)

TO

The RIGHT HONOURABLE

The Earl of BURLINGTON.

My LORD,

WHEN I declare that I have long wiſhed for an opporunity to pay a public tribute of reſpect to your Lordſhip, I more effectually recommend myſelf to the regard of mankind than, I fear, I am able to do by any of my writings. Your birth and fortune have placed you in a light that is always attended with cenſure and applauſe; but your Lordſhip's taſte in the ſciences which adorn life, and your great virtues, diſtinguiſh you as much from thoſe of the ſame quality with yourſelf as your nobility places you above the lower ranks of men. Many are illuſtrious in their titles only; but your

Lordſhip illuſtrates your titles by the dignity with which you wear them. What I am ſaying, I muſt confeſs, is unneceſſary, becauſe the whole kingdom knows it of you; and your Lordſhip has erected, I was going to ſay eternal, monuments of your excellence in a ſcience that requires a delicate caſt of mind and the niceſt judgement to be maſter of, and one that is highly becoming a great man to profeſs.

The offering which I now make to your Lordſhip is what I muſt acknowledge myſelf well pleaſed with, or I would not preſume to approach you with it; but this inſtance of my high regard for your Lordſhip is not ſo much intended as an addition to your fame as an indication of the true reſpect with which I am,

My LORD,

Your Lordſhip's

moſt humble,

obliged, and moſt obedient, ſervant

May 1739. THOMAS COOKE.

THE

PREFACE,

Containing ſome obſervations on ſatire, and on the preſent ſtate of our public entertainments.

IT was the opinion of the late Earl of SHAFTESBURY that ridicule is the touchſtone of truth; and it is ſelf-evident to me that whoever endeavours to render truth ridiculous, ſuppoſing him armed with the keeneſt weapons to attack it, will loſe by the aſſault, and go wounded from the engagement. What that excellent author ſayed of ridicule may be as juſtly ſayed of ſatire in any ſhape, whether ludicrous or ſerious; for he that flings his ſatire at that which is the object of praiſe and admiration ſticks a dart in his own breaſt; and they whoſe abilitys and manners ſhield them from the

point of ſatire are never offended by thoſe who ſcourge vice ſeverely, and correct error gently.

Tho black the jet we call, and black the crow,
White is the ermine ſtill, and white the ſnow.

LUCILIUS, who flouriſhed in the time of the commonwealth of *Rome*, ſpared none whoſe vices were too open, and whoſe examples might encreaſe the number of the bad.

——*ſecuit* LUCILIUS *urbem*,
Te LUPE, *te* MUTI. PERS. ſat. i.

TITUS MUTIUS ALBUTIUS was a perſon of great rank and power, and PUBLIUS RUTILIUS LUPUS was a man of conſular dignity; yet they could not eſcape the pen of the Satiriſt, becauſe their actions incurred his diſpleaſure: but LUCILIUS roſe in a commonwealth, when thoſe crimes were looked on as monſtrous, which, in after-times, became only faſhionable vices! If an act of the ſenate had then paſſed to have reſtrained LUCILIUS from writing, we might perhaps never have ſeen the Satires of HORACE, JUVENAL, or PERSIUS; and the world might have wanted ſome of the beſt directors of manners, and, to thoſe who have taſte, ſome of the choiceſt reliſhes of life. Tho the writings of LUCILIUS are loſs'd, we may form a judgement of them from the reſpect with which CICERO often quotes him, and from the character

racter which HORACE, JUVENAL, PERSIUS, and QUINCTILIAN, give of them. His manner ſeems no-where better pointed out than in theſe lines of JUVENAL,

> *Enſe velut ſtricto quoties* LUCILIUS *ardens*
> *Infremuit, rubet auditor, cui frigida mens eſt*
> *Criminibus, tacita ſudant praecordia culpa.*

Yet this terrible poet was formidable to none but the wicked.

WHAT, alas! ſhall we ſay, when we ſee in a nation, whoſe greateſt boaſt was its freedom and its trade, large ſteps, or rather ſtrides, taken to abridge it of one of the moſt valuable branches of liberty, the liberty of the preſs? What conſtruction muſt be made of the conduct of thoſe who lay a reſtraint on the moſt uſeful part of what are called the belle lettres, I mean dramatic poetry? What, but that they are afraid, if a monſtrous flagitious character of a perſon is repreſented moving in their own circle of life, that it ſhould be applyed to themſelves? Yet farther, what can be ſayed, if two or three verſes againſt public rapine, plunder, and other acts of injuſtice, ſhould be the cauſe of a prohibition to act a play?

> —— *tacita ſudant praecordia culpa.*

In a caſe like this people will naturally look

on ſuch proceedings as public confeſſions of fear and guilt: and minds weak enough to chuſe ſuch a conduct are conſequently carryed on to acts which lead to ſhame; and many little circumſtances will follow, which they are not aware of, which will render them as ridiculous and contemptible as they are odious. I have myſelf often ſeen a thin pale man looking over the Prompter's book at the ſtage-door almoſt during the performance of a whole play; and upon enquiry I was informed that he was the Deputy Licencer, and that he ſtood there to ſee if any words were ſpoke on the ſtage which were not in the book. What, in the name of wonder, could the man be apprehenſive of! Did he imagine that any of the actors would obtrude the words *Forage*, *Don Carlos*, *Italian Dominions*, *Convention*, *Bribery*, *Blunder*, *Halter*, and the *Devil*, for other words? And if an actor ſhould happen by miſtake to ſay *the grey mare* WAS *the better horſe*, I am ſure it would be no treaſon.

I BELIEVE, if an impertinent officious *Frenchman* was to carry a new play to Cardinal FLEURY, and to point out the following verſes as reflecting on his eminence, he would not thank him for applying them to him.

All that are here my friends ſhall ſhare my fortunes;
There's ſpoil, preferments, wealth, enough in France;
'Tis but deſerve and have. The Spaniſh *king*

Conſigns

Conſigns me fifty thouſand crowns a week,——
'Tis true, a penſion from a foreign prince
Sounds treaſon in the letter of the law;
But good intentions juſtify the deed.
DRYDEN'S *and* LEE'S *Duke of* Guiſe.

I doubt not but a miniſter, fortifyed with wiſdom and integrity as the cardinal miniſter ſeems to be, would ſmile at the ridiculous fool, and at the ſame time reprove him for his impudence in making an application which no body elſe would.

SUPPOSE a *French* poet ſhould ſay

Trade is no more, all courts of juſtice ſtop'd,
LEE'S *Theodoſius.*

That would ſcarcely give offence now, when *France* has the advantage in trade of every nation in *Europe.*

THEODOSIUS ſays in the ſame play

——I cannot call to mind
One wicked act which I have done to ſhame me.

To which MARCIAN replys,

This may be true; yet if you give the ſway
To other hands, and your poor ſubjects ſuffer,
Your negligence to them is as the cauſe.
O! THEODOSIUS, credit me, who know

The

The world, and hear how ſoldiers cenſure kings;—
In after-times, if thus you ſhou'd go on,
Your memory by warriors will be ſcorn'd.

The king of *France* could not be perſuaded that this reproach was intended for him, at a time when commerce flouriſhes under a virtuous miniſtry, and when he is dayly encreaſing his dominions with the trade of his country: he muſt know, from the good conſequences of a wiſe and juſt adminiſtration,

——————how wretchedly he rules,
That's ſerv'd by cowards, and advis'd by fools.
OTWAY's Don Carlos.

Surely ſuch generous ſentiments as the following can never give pain to a great and good mind.

——————no place of office, or command,
Not of the greateſt, ſhall be bought or ſold;
Whereas too often honours are confer'd
On ſoldiers, and no ſoldiers.
DRYDEN's *and* LEE's *Duke of* Guiſe.

Kings, like heaven's eye, ſhou'd ſpread their beams around,
Pleas'd to be ſeen, while glory's race they run:
Reſt is not for the chariot of the ſun.

Luxu-

Luxurious kings are to their people loſs'd:
They live, like drones, upon the public coſt.

DRYDEN'S *Aurenzebe.*

I ſhall ſay no more now concerning the public cenſure which a reſtraint on dramatic poetry muſt inevitably bring on the authors of ſuch a reſtraint: but certain it is, that the public will thereby be deprived of many excellent pieces, which would otherwiſe be exhibited. A man of genius is now diſheartened from writing for the ſtage: the difficultys attending it, even before the late act, diſcouraged many. To a perſon of abilitys equal to the taſk, the writing a play is the leaſt part of the labour he muſt go thro, if he intends to bring it on the ſtage. The treating with an injudicious, and ſometimes an inſincere, manager, the neceſſity of hearing the petulant remarks of actors, the bearing with the manners peculiar to that ſort of people, ſome few of them excepted, (and thoſe very few,) and the attendance at rehearſals, are ſeverer tryals of human patience than they who have never had occaſion to make them can well conceive. The means which are uſed to fill a houſe on a benefit-night are too grating to a well-diſpoſed mind to be gone thro with eaſe. And, after all theſe difficultys are ſurmounted, at the Lord Chamberlain's office is another fiery ordeal; which may prove ſeverer than the former,

mer, by blaſting all the fruits of the labours paſſed: and if a dramatic writer obtains an indulgence from thence, and his play is brought on the ſtage, there is a hazard ſtill remaining againſt him from the badneſs of the actors, and the caprice of a certain part of the town at the repreſentation of a new play. Our ſtage now is ſo unhappyly filled with actors, that a play writ by a maſterly hand would ſuffer as much as a piece of HANDEL's muſic attempted by bad voices in an ill manner, accompanyed with bad inſtruments by unſkilful hands.

THE repreſentation of an excellent tragedy, or comedy, is certainly one of the nobleſt entertainments which a perſon of underſtanding and taſte can deſire to ſee, when the actors are capable of doing juſtice to their parts; but when our ſtages labour under the diſadvantages of miſmanagement, of actors in whoſe praiſe little can be ſayed, and of clamours raiſed in the behalf of harlequins, or on any other account, I ſhould not be ſurpriſed to ſee thoſe theatres entirely deſerted by every perſon of taſte and diſtinction: and I do not in the leaſt doubt but they would be, if Mr. *Handel* was able to procure ſuch voices as are fit to be vehicles of his muſic to the ear.

THERE never was a time in *England* when our people of high rank, and indeed thoſe of lower condition in *London*, ſhewed a greater inclination to encourage public entertaiments than now;

now; a plain indication of which we have had ſeveral winters paſſed in the numerous appearance that has been almoſt every night at one playhouſe, tho under the diſadvantages which I have mentioned: yet that ſucceſs was, in a great meaſure, owing to the want of other entertainments; for I obſerved at the *Oratorio* of *Saul*, and other of HANDEL's compoſitions, that the great concern of the audience was that he had not voices capable of doing him right.

SOME are inclined to think that many go to the repreſentation of plays for improvement; but alaſs! not one in a thouſand goes with that view; and, if they did, that end may be as well anſwered by reading a play at home at a leſs expence than in ſeeing it acted. No perſon of good underſtanding wants the inſtructions of our modern dramatic poets, or indeed of any: the delight that ariſes to a fine underſtanding joined with taſte is from the manner in which the fable is related, the turns of fortune, the manlyneſs and tenderneſs of the ſentiments, and the images of fancy cloathed in a poetical language. What is often called a good *ſenſible* play is of all things the moſt inſipid; and the authors of ſuch are as little capable of inſtructing or entertaining as any of the audience are.

WE have no greater proof of the readyneſs of almoſt all ranks of people, in and near about *London*, to promote truly polite entertainments

than in the countenance that they give to thoſe in *Spring-Gardens* at *Vaux-hall*; which I may venture to ſay are the politeſt which ever were in *England*, perhaps in *Europe*, of ſo public a nature, the ſituation, the ſcene, the muſic, the company, largely contributing to render it ſo, and not without an air of magnificence from the coſtly decorations.

THIS is all that I ſhall ſay at preſent of our public entertainments; the particulars of all which will be more nicely examined into next winter; when a paper will be weekly publiſhed, perhaps oftener, by a ſociety of gentlemen, not unequal to the deſign, who have already by them a ſtock ſufficient for the publication of a year; nor will they confine themſelves to public entertainments and the directors of them, but take a ſurvey of men and manners in other circles of life, without invading the provinces of the authors of the *Craftſman* * and *Common Senſe* †, tho they may ſometimes venture to hunt their monſters of ſtate with other beaſts of prey.

I PUBLISH this play before it is acted that I may rid myſelf of any farther anxiety of treating from winter to winter with triflers: how deſerving, or undeſerving, it may be of repreſentation on the ſtage the public will judge: when I begun to write it, I reſolved not to con-

* That publiſhed by *H. Goreham* in *Fleetſtreet*.

† That publiſhed by *J. Purſer* in *White-Fryars*.

fine

fine myſelf to either verſe or proſe; nor is there a verſe in it that did not come with the ſame eaſe with any of the proſe; and I am convinced that whoever writes in *Engliſh* on a ſubject where there is a neceſſity of paſſion and images of fancy, he will involuntaryly write great part of his work in verſe.

THERE wore ſome difficultys attending the writing this play which are not obvious to many readers. I took the hint from an old legal ſtory; whether the caſe is in any book of reports I can not poſitively ſay: the characters, as related in the ſtory, are in very low life; and perſons of ſuch condition have ſeldom qualitys or virtues ſufficient to intereſt an audience in their favour; I therefore lifted ſome of the characters a little higher than they are deſcribed in the ſtory, and ſupplyed by invention what was wanted in fact to render it a fit fable for a play: in ſhort, the whole is my own invention, excepting the laſt ſcene of the play, and what directly relates to that fact. The women and YOUNG FREEMAN are entire characters of my own, having no foundation in the ſtory for them.

April 1739.

THE

PROLOGUE.

WHene'er LUCILIUS, *as with ſword in hand,*
Laſh'd with his pen the monſters of the land,
The hearer's, and the reader's, cheeks were ſpread
With conſcious bluſhes, as their crimes were red,
The practicer of vice, the canker'd heart,
Felt, from the ſecret guilt within, a ſmart;
Yet with their virtue loſs'd they not their ſhame;
Nor puniſh'd him from whom the ſatire came.

IN modern times, where rule *is held by* might,
Where will *is* law, *and* law *muſt paſs for* right,
Where impious men conſult their private gain,
And not the glory of their prince's reign,
Speak not of men unfaithful to their truſt,
Tho ſpoke of nations ages paſs'd in duſt;
A word draws vengeance on an author's back:
O! name not darkneſs; *for their deeds are* black!

THESE

THESE ſcenes the woes of no exalted ſtate
Preſent, nor ſatire to alarm the great:
Here love and friendſhip ſhare an equal part,
To call ſoft pity from the tender heart:
The pious tear here filial duty ſheds,
And weds awhile to ſorrow when ſhe weds;
Her virtuous griefs, by love ſupported, flow,
And find relief alone from CUPID'S *bow.*

PER-

PERSONS of the PLAY.

MEN.

FREEMAN, a farmer.

Young FREEMAN, his ſon.

BRIAR, a farmer.

WELDON, a neighbouring gentleman.

A JUDGE.

WOMEN.

Mrs. FREEMAN.

Mrs. BRIAR.

CHARLOTTE BRIAR.

Jurymen, witneſſes, &c.

The SCENE *the country, in* Kent.

THE

Mournful Nuptials,

OR

Love the Cure of all Woes.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Young FREEMAN and CHARLOTTE BRIAR.

Young FREEMAN.

WHY, CHARLOTTE, 'hangs this melancholly on thy brow?
Why droops my love? Why droops my ev'ry flow'r
Compris'd in one? Why on this happy day,
Indulgent to our wiſhes, wilt thou unkindly thus indulge unſeaſonable ſorrow?
Why on this day on which the pious man
Has join'd in wedlock's bands the hands of two
Whoſe hearts by love were long before united?

CHAR-

CHARLOTTE.

Ah! FREEMAN! there's the thorn that goads my ſide! I confeſs, ſince firſt our mutual vows we plighted, I thought each day an age till I ſecur'd you mine; and, now I have obtain'd the purchaſe of a thouſand ſighs, I have a thouſand fears of loſing you.

Y. FREEMAN.

And whence ariſe thoſe fears? From no diſtruſt, I hope, of one whoſe honour's dearer to him than his life, of one who places you in the ſame ballance with his life and honour.

CHARLOTTE.

No, my much lov'd, and ever honour'd, huſband, I can not entertain a thought of ill of you: but think—I'm BRIAR's daughter.

Y. FREEMAN.

Thou art the lovely'ſt roſe that ever blow'd.
'Tis true, the difference that has long ſubſiſted betwixt our fathers has been the cauſe of our concealing our paſſion from them, and of our clandeſtine marriage:
But, ſhou'd diſſention reign among our parents,
And everlaſting ſtrife be ſow'd betwixt them,
Yet ſhall our loves immaculate remain.
Baniſh all diſmal apprehenſions from your mind;
Our loves perhaps may take a happyer turn,
And be the cement of perpetual union
Betwixt our preſent jarring familys.
I know my father's ever gentle nature
Is prone to pardon injurys, and to excuſe
The little failings of unwary youth:
He looks not with the rigid eye of age,
But always makes ſuch favourable allowances as the wiſe and good ſhou'd make: in ſhort, I know his greateſt pleaſure is to communicate to others what happyneſs he can.

CHAR-

CHARLOTTE.

Wou'd I cou'd ſay as much of my unhappy father! Unhappy I may truly call him; for, ſuch his temper, he has no friends but his own poor little family, my mother and myſelf; and when we tell him, as we do with trembling, of his moroſeneſs, and his ill-judg'd pride, he frowns upon my mother, and with a ſurly voice bids her be gone, and crys you'll make the girl as fooliſh as yourſelf: but, my dear FREEMAN, let me intreat you to inform me what was the cauſe of this long difference betwixt our parents; for I cou'd never learn but an imperfect account of it at home.

Y. FREEMAN.

'Twas on a treſſpaſs; for which we offer'd ample recompence; but, that being rejected, a ſuit of law commenc'd: your father has already been at more expence than he is able to bear: my father propos'd to make a neighbouring gentleman, a perſon of known worth and integrity, the arbitrator, and to abide by his judgement rather than go on to feed contention for the advantage of the lawyers only; and this was the day appointed for the arbitration.

CHARLOTTE.

Heav'n make it fortunate; for upon that,
I fear, our fate, or mine at leaſt, depends.

Y. FREEMAN.

Your fate depends on me, and mine on you.
CHARLOTTE, ſo cloſe our hearts are rivetted,
That he, who wou'd divide us, muſt in the ſeparation
draw the life-blood of both.——I ſee my father coming this way: retire, my love, beneath theſe ſhades, while I learn what the arbitration has been, and the conſequence of it, and while I try the tendereſt of parents with a relation of my paſſion for you: as he re-

ceives that, I ſhall hereafter tell him the ſecret of our marriage.

CHARLOTTE.

Succeſs and everlaſting love be with you. (*She retires.*

SCENE II.

FREEMAN ſenr. enters.

FREEMAN ſenr.

I greet thee, LEWIS, with a father's love;
And, whether 'tis deſign, or chance, that throws thee in my way,
I always count it gain to have thee near me,
My ſon, my beſt companion, and my friend.

Y. FREEMAN.

I owe you, Sir, more than is barely due to a parent: not once in five and twenty years I've ſeen the hand of rigour o'er me.
What I remember of my infant days
Were all with pleaſure and with fondneſs crown'd:
While at ſchool, I thought I chang'd one father for another, if I was to judge from the tenderneſs of my maſter; which I imputed, more than to any merit of my own, to the ſtrict charge my loving father gave concerning me. At college pleaſures flow'd on me, in a thouſand ſtreams,
From the rich fountains of old *Greece* and *Rome:*
And now the ſocial Virtues of the beſt of fathers preſent to me all that I cou'd wiſh to meet with in a friend.

FREEMAN ſenr.

If theſe are your ſentiments, as I have no reaſon to think they are not, I am bleſs'd beyond my expectations in a ſon.

Thou

Thou art the harveſt of my life's long toil;
And the rich crop rewards my labour well.

Y. FREEMAN.

As your peace, Sir, is one of my firſt concerns, I ſhall be glad to know how the affair betwixt you and our neighbour BRIAR is determin'd.

FREEMAN ſenr.

To my content, tho to my coſt: Mr. WELDON, our friend and arbitrator, propos'd paying half BRIAR's expence in the ſuit, which he has litigiouſly carry'd on, rather than ſee contention betwixt two neighbours kep'd alive: the generous propoſal was applauded; but I choſe to pay the whole myſelf, hoping by that to purchaſe a quiet neighbour, a friend he is incapable of being: the man is poor, and ſeems to hate me for no other reaſon but that I'm more ſucceſsful than himſelf?

Y. FREEMAN.

Weak man that can indulge a temper which makes him wretched! 'Tis planting thorns and brambles in his breaſt! Poor lovely CHARLOTTE, how much unlike the ſtock from which you ſprung!

FREEMAN ſenr.

What maid is that whom you nam'd in ſuch tender terms?

Y. FREEMAN.

'Tis BRIAR's daughter, Sir.

FREEMAN ſenr.

I thought it was the ſame. Come, LEWIS, deal with me as a friend, to whom you had ſworn inviolable truth and confidence; and you ſhall find that open heart, and unreſerv'd regard, which you might reaſonably expect from ſuch a friend, who had plighted the ſame faith to you. Tho I have weather'd thro near fifty years, I have not yet forgot what the ſoft paſſions are; and I miſtake if ſtill I cannot read the language

of the eyes. I obſerv'd, when you nam'd the maid,
That change of countenance, and change of voice,
Which tell me that your boſom has receiv'd
A gueſt that you deſire to entertain:
If it is ſo, communicate to me;
And give me no room to complain of a reſerv'dneſs in you which you ſhall never find in me.

Y. FREEMAN.

No, be my love my curſe, if e'er I wrong
So good a father, and ſo true a friend:
There are ſome errors paſs'd; but, by the friendſhip which you profeſs to me, I beg you wou'd not now enquire into them: what I at preſent ask
Is your conſent to proſecute my love:
That ſhe is fair all who have eyes can tell;
And ſhe is chaſte as is the falling ſnow:
She has ſuch virtues to adorn her life,
As in themſelves will be an ample dow'r.

FREEMAN ſenr.

I've often ſeen the girl, and mark'd her well.
And I muſt acknowledge that I think your paſſion can not paint her more beautyful than ſhe is:
And, by the ſacred name of him that cloaths
The earth with beauty, and the ſun with light,
Was ſhe as poor as is the ſun-burn'd wench
That ſtoops to take the gleanings of my fields,
I wou'd myſelf perform the father's office,
And give her hand to thee, ſo much does FREENAN's happyneſs depend upon his ſon's.

Y. FREEMAN.

Then may that ſon ne'er know the ſweet poſſeſſion of his love, if ever willingly he gives that father pain.

FREEMAN ſenr.

Yet, my ſon, methinks there is a bar — Nay, do not ſtart: it is not ſuch a bar as ſhall obſtruct your love, but may awhile delay the ſweet poſſeſſion. You know my

my family is but of a low beginning: my forefathers ſeem never to have been more than poor inhabitants of *Kent*, the humble tillers of another's land; and all my heritage was the long leaſe which has been oft' renew'd from ſon to ſon. When I was young the neighbours were pleas'd to cry my perſon up; and I always had, what I always ſtrove to deſerve, the character of an honeſt man. Your mother, whoſe fortune was five thouſand pounds, was marry'd to me againſt the conſent of her friends: her father was a gentleman: on that ſhe has too much preſum'd; but I, who knew that words cou'd ne'er infect my meat or drink, bore the woman's fooliſh vanity, as I wou'd the chattering of the daw, ne'er contradict it: but to the purpoſe more: I doubt your mother's pride will make her ſtart objections to the match; but it never ſhall obſtruct it wholly: all that I mean is, for her peace, to uſe ſome art to draw her gently in to give conſent. I'm going home; and there I'll break the ſecret to her firſt: you perhaps are going another way: my bleſſing is ever with you. (FREEMAN *ſenr. goes.*

SCENE III.

CHARLOTTE comes from beneath the ſhade.

Young FREEMAN.

Thou beſt of men.——
Come forth, reveal thyſelf thou happy bride:
Come from the covert; I'll purſue my chace;
And thou, my lovely game, ſhalt ev'ry morn
Wake with the waking day to happyneſs.
My father views thee with a parent's eye:
Now let the buſ'neſs of our lives be love.

CHAR-

CHARLOTTE.

I hear'd him paſs the joyful ſentence on me:
My task is now to come:
My father's great neceſſity may prove
My greateſt bleſſing; for, ſo well I know him,
If he was able to beſtow on me
A portion equal to your own,
He'd ſooner match me far below myſelf
Than let me be the wife of FREEMAN's ſon.

Y. FREEMAN.

Come, my CHARLOTTE, we'll go to him together;
Together we'll preſent ourſelves to him,
The tendereſt, the moſt loving, pair that ever plighted vows.
I'll ſave my charming bride from the confuſion
Of telling the ſoft ſtory of her paſſion:
I'll be myſelf the orator of love,
And tell our tale in ſuch a moving ſtrain,
As, was his heart wrap'd in Siberian ſnow,
Shou'd melt his frozen breaſt:
I'll paint a proſpect of ſuch happyneſs
To us and to himſelf,
As, was he ſavage as th' Hyrcanian tyger,
Shou'd bribe him to our Intereſt.

Throw into future hours, my love, thine eyes,
And ſee what ſcenes of bliſs before us riſe;
The fields, the painted meads, and chryſtal ſtreams,
And groves, indulgent all to lovers, dreams;
Where peace for ever dwells, nor enters care,
And LOVE the little god that governs there.

The End of the Firſt ACT.

ACT II. SCENE I.

BRIAR's *Houſe.*

BRIAR and CHARLOTTE.

BRIAR.

YES, CHARLOTTE, yes, my child, to make you happy,
I'll curb my rage, I'll bridle up my hate:
The bitter indignation that I bear
To FREEMAN is not level'd at his ſon:
I will love him, my girl, for loving you.

CHARLOTTE.

O! may your days be long and proſ'prous all!
He ſurely is the ſweeteſt, gentleſt, youth,
That ever trod the plains, or woo'd a maid!

BRIAR.

Daughter, I muſt confeſs I did not think 'twas in the pow'r of words to throw my temper into ſuch a mold as the young man has fram'd it to:
His language found a paſſage to my heart,
And made me wiſh the ſon of FREEMAN well.

CHARLOTTE.

What do my eyes behold? my FREEMAN's mother!
Come, I ſuppoſe, to bleſs me with her voice.
I ſhall grow mad with joy.

BRIAR.

Ah! does the proud dame once condeſcend to enter BRIAR's roof!

SCENE

SCENE II.

Mrs. FREEMAN enters.

BRIAR.

This unexpected viſit, Madam———

Mrs. FREEMAN.

Is on no ſlight occaſion, neighbour BRIAR———My husband has inform'd me of my ſon's addreſſes to your daughter———

BRIAR.

And you wou'd make us ſenſible of the great honour you intend us.

Mrs. FREEMAN.

An honour that's too great for you or her.

BRIAR.

Good woman, have a care: be not too preſuming.

Mrs. FREEMAN.

How! is this your language to your landlord's ſiſter? Have not you and your fore-fathers been, time out of mind, the vaſſals of my family?

BRIAR.

Tenants we've been, and always pay'd our rent,
Tho' we've been poor:——but, Madam, to the purpoſe;
Whate'er it is, tell it in words as plain
As is the man to whom you ſpeak.

CHARLOTTE.

O! my poor heart, on what a wreck thou'rt thrown!
(*To herſelf.*

Mrs. FREEMAN.

Then plainly my deſign is this, to tell you that your thoughts ſoar much above your low condition. Whate'er my ſon's miſguided love may be, or whate'er his father's

father's reſolution is, your daughter is no wife for Mrs. FREEMAN's ſon. Look round about you, and you ſoon may find a husband for your daughter among the labouring honeſt hinds of *Kent:* or if, my wench, you chuſe a ſingle life, perhaps I may prefer you, when young FREEMAN marrys, to be his lady's waiting-maid.

CHARLOTTE.

Whatever is my lot,
Eternal bleſſings be on FREEMAN's head. (*She weeps.*

BRIAR.

Waſte not a tear my child.——Woman be gone;
Civility to thee wou'd be a crime.
Know that my daughter, cloath'd by nature's hand
With beauty, and adorn'd with modeſty
And truth, wou'd grace thy family
With ſuch a picture of the female ſex
As never yet it ſaw.

Mrs. FREEMAN.

I tell thee, man——

BRIAR.

I tell thee, woman, I will hear no more.
Yourſelf was the firſt cauſe of my hatred to FREEMAN's family,
Which encreas'd with time, and now is fix'd,
Faſt as the roots of oaks, in BRIAR's heart:
O! cou'd my imprecations influence heav'n,
Mildews ſhou'd blaſt thy corn, a murrain ſeize
On all thy flocks and herds; but on thyſelf
What curſe wou'd I draw down!
A long old age, deformity, and cramps.
As for my child, ſhe ſhall this day be ſent
Where FREEMAN's ſon ſhall ne'er behold her more.
Away, my ears are deaf to your reply.

(*He thruſts her out.*

SCENE III.

CHARLOTTE.

My father, my ever honour'd father, do not break the heart of your much lov'd, and ever loving, daughter, in your reſentment to a haughty Woman.

BRIAR.

Did ſhe not treat that daughter with diſdain? If I forgive her, may ev'ry curſe I wiſh'd to fall on her fall on myſelf and mine.—— If you're deſirous of a father's love, forget young FREEMAN.

CHARLOTTE.

Impute not to my FREEMAN a fault that's not his own: I dare engage, for him and for his father, that neither gave conſent to what ſhe has done: ſhe follow'd, unknown to them, the dictates of her pride and ſettled hate.

BRIAR.

Then from that pride and ſettled hate ſhall grow
Plagues which ſhall taint her ev'ry hour of life.
How fruitful is an angry mind of thought!
I've now conceiv'd a vengeance that I'll take.
I'll ſend you forthwith to your uncle; whoſe care of you will equal mine: he has a ſon,
Who long has view'd you with a lover's eye;
Whoſe honeſty and induſtry will make you
A joyful mother and a happy wife.

CHARLOTTE.

O! name no husband for your child but FREEMAN:
I have a reaſon, Sir, which I cou'd give,
That wou'd diſarm you of your rage, and change
Your reſolution.——Alas! what can I ſay? If I tell him of our marriage, it may enrage him more.

(*To herſelf.*

BRIAR

BRIAR.

Abſence, my child, is a certain cure for love: the dayly intercourſe of new and different objects will, by degrees, drive thoſe ideas from your mind which now perplex you, and, in due courſe of time, obliterate all traces of your preſent love. Believe a father that inſtructs you from the experience which himſelf has had.

CHARLOTTE.

Here comes my advocate; to whom I fly for refuge; and in whoſe breaſt I muſt repoſe the ſecret of our marriage. (*To herſelf.*

SCENE IV.

Mrs. BRIAR enters.

CHARLOTTE.

My deareſt mother, help to break the ſtorm that's low'ring over me. My unkind father, tho he means me well, is taring me from all that I hold dear on earth, except himſelf and you, from my lov'd FREEMAN.

Mrs. BRIAR.

With the ſubmiſſion of an humble wife, I do intreat my husband to recollect the vows he pay'd to me. Had I, when of our daughter's age, been torne from you, I ſhou'd not now, ſo well I know my heart, have liv'd to intercede for her to you.

BRIAR.

The woman's always contradicting me. Do'ſt thou imagine that thou lov'ſt the girl better than I do? or do'ſt thou think thyſelf more wiſe and able to contrive her good than is thy husband?

Mrs. BRIAR.

I neither think myſelf ſo wiſe and able to contrive as you; nor do I think my love exceeds your own for

our dear child: but I think I know the workings of her tender heart by what I well remember to have felt myſelf for you.

BRIAR.

Tho you do thwart my will, I cannot hate you; for you have always been a good and an obedient wife.

CHARLOTTE.

Heaven give her words ſucceſs! (*To herſelf.*

BRIAR.

But if I once reſolve, your words are ſpent in vain; they paſs
Like gentle winds over the ſtanding corn,
Ruffle the ears, but leave no trace behind.
My brother's ſon ſhall make her a happy bride: I'm going to prepare her for her journey: do you prepare the girl to bear it well. (*He goes.*

SCENE V.

Mrs. BRIAR.

CHARLOTTE, if once your father is reſolv'd on any act, all arguments to him are as if we ſhou'd endeavour to argue down a ſtorm or northern blaſt: ſubmiſſion therefore, if you can ſubmit, to his paternal will, is all the remedy I can propoſe.

CHARLOTTE.

Are you againſt me too? While he was here, you pleaded for your daughter; and now wou'd you perſuade me to that which you oppos'd when he was preſent?

Mrs. BRIAR.

I wou'd perſuade you to your eaſe, my child: and, if there is a way to ſhun the match your father has propos'd, you're ſure of my aſſiſtance, while I can act conſiſtent with the duty of a parent and a wife.

CHARLOTTE

CHARLOTTE.

Then I've ſome hopes. Let us retire into your chamber; and there I will relate to you the ſecret which I fear to tell my father.

There I'll deſcribe to you the lovely'ſt youth,
That ever fill'd a virgin's ear with truth,
Whoſe love and honour are his only pride;
And I'm his faithful and his maiden bride.

(*They go.*

SCENE VI.

FREEMAN'S *Houſe.*

FREEMAN ſenr. Mrs. FREEMAN, and Y. FREEMAN.

Y. FREEMAN.

'Tis cruel, Madam, 'tis unmercyful, to torture thus the heart of an obedient and a tender ſon; but I'll complain no more of your unkindneſs:——and did her father ſay ſhe ſhou'd be ſent where FREEMAN never ſhall behold her more?

Mrs. FREEMAN.

He did, and loaded me with bitter curſes.

Y. FREEMAN.

CHARLOTTE, I come once more to try the art of ſoft perſuaſion: the fabled taſk of him who mov'd the rigid king of hell to gain his wife is now impos'd on me. (*He goes.*

SCENE

SCENE VII.

FREEMAN ſenr.

I've borne too long the froward temper of a head-ſtrong woman: this is too much to bear.

Mrs. FREEMAN.

What have I done to make you treat me thus?
Near thirty years I've been your virtuous wife,
And never had reproach from you before.

FREEMAN ſenr.

And therefore you've preſum'd upon my eaſyneſs of temper: 'tis true,
You've never had reproach from me before;
And much I wiſh you never had deſerv'd it.
Ungenerous dame, look backward to the day
In which I firſt engag'd my love to you,
And ſay if you can call to mind a moment
In which I ever croſs'd your purpoſes.
Your beauty's, whoſe attraction once was great,
Have never ſuffer'd but by the hand of time:
Care never prey'd upon your roſy cheeks;
Nor have your eyes e'er met an angry brow
From me till now: your inclinings
I always with a lib'ral heart indulg'd:
Is it therefore kind, or honourable,
Thus to proclaim an open war with me,
To fight againſt my will in an affair
On which depends
The whole felicity of a lov'd ſon?

Mrs. FREEMAN.

What I have done———

FREEMAN ſenr.

By your own confeſſion what you've done is wrong.
After I told you of our ſon's ſettled love for BRIAR's daughter,

daughter, and of my own approbation of his choice, what but a ſpirit of malignity cou'd drive you on to break a match, which ſeems to be the chain that holds the life and ſafety of your ſon?

Mrs. FREEMAN.

The honour of my family's concern'd:
Why ſhou'd my blood contaminate itſelf,
By mixing with ſo low and vile a race,
If I am able to prevent the evil?

FREEMAN ſenr.

That pride
Shou'd thus ſurvive the mem'ry of your love!
Preſume to talk of family no more to me;
That has been bandy'd in my ear too long:
Our currents, which have thirty years been join'd,
Make but one ſtream in him. Have you forgot
That your ſon's caſe was once your own? If you have,
I'll wake that nature in your breaſt which you
Shou'd ne'er have ſuffer'd to have ſleep'd.

Mrs. FREEMAN.

I never ſaw this rage in him before. (*To herſelf.*
If I have acted wrong,
You need not tell me of that wrong in thunder:
I can receive rebuke, or hear advice,
If you deliver it with a ſofter voice.

FREEMAN ſenr.

You've been unus'd to my rebuke, and deaf to my advice: when therefore the peace, the intereſt, of my family's concern'd,
I muſt not, as in ſlight affairs I've done,
Suffer your pride and humours to direct,
Where honour, and where wiſdom, ſhou'd preſide.

Mrs. FREEMAN.

I ſee my error, and repent ſincerely my late miſdoings. (*To herſelf.*
Your former lenity and tenderneſs

Convince

Convince me of your goodneſs and your love:
And your reſentment in a cauſe ſo juſt
Speaks the reſolution of a manly mind,
To which my weakneſs ought always to ſubmit.
If you'll forget, or if you can forgive,
All my paſs'd conduct which has giv'n you pain,
My future life ſhall all be paſs'd
In humble reſignation to your will,
And in ſubmiſſion
To your ſuperior wiſdom and your pow'r:
And may my life be long with you, that I
May earn your pardon
By a long practice of obedient love.

FREEMAN ſenr.

Diveſted of your pride, and cloath'd with this humility,
You are as lovely to my eyes as when
I led you bluſhing to the bridal bed,
'E're ſeventeen ſummers
Had call'd the full-blown roſes to your cheeks.
To-morrow I'll go myſelf to treat of my ſon's marriage:
this night I will devote to you.

Wou'd woman learn what is her lovely'ſt dreſs,
She'd not by grandeur ſtrive to make her leſs;
She wou'd not wiſh to make admirers gaze
At the rich tiſſue, or the di'mond's blaze:
In humble beauty cloath'd, her beſt attire,
She'd either keep alive, or wake deſire.

The End of the ſecond ACT.

ACT

ACT III. SCENE I.

BRIAR's *Houſe.*

FREEMAN ſenr. and BRIAR.

BRIAR.

YOUR ſon was here laſt night: I told him plainly then my reſolution: my daughter is no wife for him.

FREEMAN.

Once more I tell you that what his mother did was all unknown to us.

BRIAR.

It may be ſo; yet ſhall my child ne'er be ſubjected to her ungovernable pride;
Who, in her peeviſh moods, wou'd ev'ry day
Upbraid her with her father's lowlyneſs,
And ſour her meals with tart unkind reproaches;
And who wou'd let her know that all ſhe wears
Is but the badge of charity. Rather
Than match my girl to wretchedneſs like that,
I'd throw her on the barren heath to dwell
In a poor homely hut thatch'd by the hands
Of her laborious husband, whoſe dayly toil
Shou'd be their chief ſupport, while ſhe at home
Plys, from the morning to the ev'ning ſun,
The ſpinning-wheel,
In the coarſe garment which herſelf has wrought.

FREEMAN ſenr.

Nor this, nor that, needs be your daughter's lot:
My wife repents her late raſh act,
And wiſhes now to call your child her own.

BRIAR.

Which ſhe ſhall never do: I thank her for her viſit; for by that ſhe ſhew'd me what a fury my poor child has eſcap'd.

SCENE II.

Young FREEMAN enters.

Young FREEMAN.

With the reſpect
Due to the fountain of my CHARLOTTE's life ——

BRIAR.

Young man, this viſit is as fruitleſs as the laſt: your father's and your own perſuaſions no more can move me than can contending winds remove a mountain.

Y. FREEMAN.

Sir, you miſtake me;
I come not to intreat, but to demand.
Reſtore to me my wife, my virgin wife,
Whom yeſter's ſun beheld
In wedlock's ſacred bands to FREEMAN join'd.

BRIAR.

O! this is well! firſt you rob my fold,
And then, with an undaunted face, demand
The lamb that I've re-taken from the thief.
The negligence with which you've treated me,
By marrying my daughter
Without ſo much as aſking my conſent,
Shews me in what mean light you place her father.
You thought, as I ſuppoſe,
That there was no neceſſity to aſk
A poor unfortunate parent his aſſent
To wed his dow'rleſs child: he doubtleſs, you believ'd, wou'd thank you: but know, unthinking youth, this diſreſpect throws thee as far from my regard as is the

weſt

weſt from eaſt; and, if I'm able, I'll part my daughter from you
As far aſunder as the north and ſouth.

FREEMAN ſenr.

Hear me, raſh man: perhaps the ſentence that you paſs on him devotes yourſelf, your wife, and child, to miſery: here ſtands a father wrong'd, as you call yourſelf: I was no more conſulted in the match than you; yet I forgive it; for 'twas a fault of youth, a fault of love.

Y. FREEMAN.

This was the firſt occaſion I ever gave my father to complain, and ſhall be, if I know myſelf, the laſt. I wiſh that others wou'd learn from you humanity and prudence.

BRIAR.

Let them forgive who will, I'll not forgive:
Perhaps I'm wrong, yet, while I think I'm right,
Tho I am wrong, I will be ſo. You may
As well attempt
To make the gallant ſteed a patient aſs,
As try to frame my temper to your own.

FREEMAN ſenr.

I wou'd be your phyſician, and cure you of that phrenzy which ſeems to hurry you on to your deſtruction. You are on a precipice, and ſee it not; and I wou'd fain prevent you from taking the fatal leap.

BRIAR.

Thou ſolemn and profound philoſopher
Reſerve your ſage inſtructions
For thoſe who will be thankful for your pains.

Y. FREEMAN.

I bluſh to ſee my father condeſcend
To plead ſo much in vain, and I the cauſe:
Pardon me, Sir,
That I have brought this weight upon your head;

Loſe no more words on that ungen'rous man.
Caſt the rich ſeed upon a barren rock,
And thence expect to reap a fruitful harveſt.
Since you have ſtop'd your ears to mild perſuaſion,
I tell you, man,
You can as ſoon drive from the ſtars their brightneſs
As from my CHARLOTTE's thoughts expel her FREEMAN;
Where-e'er ſhe is, ſhe will be always mine;
You may as eaſyly make vice and virtue one, as prevail on her
To give her heart or hand to any other:
She is my wife,
More lov'd by me than by the eye the light,
Or by the ear than is the charmer's voice:
I go, but I ſhall come to you again,
And make you render up a true account
Of the great treaſure you withhold from me.

BRIAR.

Know I can threaten, friend, as loud as you.
Tho much I love my child,
Yet there is nothing that I will not do
To keep her from you: ſo be gone; I hurl
Defyance after you.

FREEMAN ſenr.

You may repent too late.

(FREEMAN *ſenr. and* Y. FREEMAN *go.*

SCENE III.

BRIAR.———Going towards the door.

What ho! you clod of earth, you walking piece of dirt,
Go call your miſtreſs hither, tell my wife
Her huſband wants her here.—It is reſolv'd:

Young

Young FREEMAN and my daughter have not yet
Conſummated their marriage: without delay
CHARLOTTE ſhall therefore wed my brother's ſon.

SCENE IV.

Mrs. BRIAR enters.

BRIAR.

What have you done? Have you prevail'd upon the Girl
To bear her parting with a patient mind?

Mrs. BRIAR.

No: FREEMAN has lay'd ſo ſtrong a hold upon her heart,
That neither you nor I can tare him thence.

BRIAR.

'Tis her firſt love; and it muſt coſt ſome tears.
The girl is young, and therefore flexible:
That ſoftneſs, on which with eaſe FREEMAN impreſs'd his love, may, by judicious hands, be molded to another ſhape.

Mrs. BRIAR.

It will be very hard, I fear, to find
An object that can drive him from her breaſt.
The youth is lovely in his perſon, and is,
By her account, poſſeſs'd of ev'ry art
To captivate the ſoul of innocence:
He has ſuch virtues, and ſuch qualitys,
Which ever muſt, ſhe ſays, ſecure the heart
He has won.

BRIAR.

You ſeem to dwell upon his praiſe with pleaſure:
That's not the end for which I ſent for you.
What?——You, I ſuppoſe, indulge her in her commendations

mendations of him: are thoſe the means you uſe to make her think of him no more?

Mrs. BRIAR.

Reproach me not with faults of which I am not guilty. ——I have exerted all the authority which a mother ought: I have us'd all the perſuaſions which I think are juſt: yet I wou'd not uſe authority with cruelty; nor wou'd I perſuade my child to that which may make all her future life unhappy, and make that life perhaps but ſhort. (*She weeps.*

BRIAR.

This is a plot againſt me: you are in FREEMAN's Intereſt I ſee. You practiſe on me with your pray'rs and tears. You did prevail laſt night; and I conſented that ſhe ſhou'd ſtay; but it was with the hope that you wou'd not abuſe the indulgence which I ſhew'd, and that you wou'd endeavour to bring her to obedience to my will.——However, now I'll eaſe you of the taſk: the journey is but ſhort, I'll to my brother's go with her myſelf, and ſee her marry'd before I leave the place.

Mrs. BRIAR.

If ever I found favour in your eyes, or if I ever have deſerv'd your love, hear me this once, hear a tender mother and a faithful wife.

BRIAR.

Be quick; I can not hear long ſpeeches now.

Mrs. BRIAR.

This once, and I have done.
If to your brother's ſon you wed our child,
You marry poverty to beggary,
And make the girl a ſlave, a wretched ſlave,
Match'd to an abject clown that ſhe abhors:
Think therefore, for I know you love her well,
How you can bear to ſee her live a poor
Unhappy wife, a ſtranger to content!
And if her life's cut ſhort, which heav'n forbid,

By

By grief, how will you then bedew her cheeks
With tears, with fruitleſs tears!
Now turn your eye, from this dark diſmal proſpect,
To the fair ſcene which FREEMAN's love preſents:
The huſband of her choice will crown her days
With tenderneſs and joy; and we perhaps
May ſhare their fortunes as we ſhare their love.
Diſtreſs, that ſeems approaching to our door,
May by this match be drove entirely from us.
I've done; and now
The language of my heart has paſs'd my lips,
I'm all obedience to my husband's will.

BRIAR.

Thou tendereſt mother, and thou gentleſt wife,
That ever bleſs'd a huſband and a child,
Lead in thy ſilken bands this ſavage man.
Stand there;
And let me view the treaſure of my ſoul,
To which I never ow'd a reſtleſs night,
Or an unpeaceful day.
Fortune may throw her keeneſt arrows here,
While you, the dear phyſician of my mind,
Shall heal the wounds and bruiſes which they give.
Now, by that high providence that gave thee to me,
I wou'd not for all FREEMAN's wealth, nor for the wide poſſeſſion
Of ev'ry fruitful hill and vale in *Kent*,
Give up the title that I have in thee.
Come, my ſweet monitor, my humble guide,
Now you've ſubdu'd my heart, direct my hand;
For I'll this moment write to FREEMAN,
And offer your propoſals for the marriage.

My guardian angel I behold in thee;
And now methinks with other eyes I ſee:
So great the change, another man I move;
And all my heart is tenderneſs and love. (*They go.*

SCENE

SCENE V.

FREEMAN's Houſe.

Young FREEMAN and Mrs. FREEMAN.

Y. FREEMAN.

You may as well
Call back the bluſhes to the faded roſe,
Or bid the drooping lilly raiſe its head,
As aſk a ſmile, or cheerful look, from me.

Mrs. FREEMAN.

Why will you indulge this melancholly
To the deſtruction of a parent's peace?

Y. FREEMAN.

Ye pleaſant hills, and ye delightful vales,
Ye painted meads, and love-ſequeſter'd ſhades,
Which oft' have witneſs'd to my happyer hours,
Farewçl, the goddeſs of the ſcenes is fled!
The bright inſpirer of my heart with joy
Is gone, and left me to deſpair and woe.

Mrs. FREEMAN.

Hear a fond mother that wou'd fain apply
A remedy to your diſtemper'd mind.

Y. FREEMAN.

But why unjuſt do I accuſe the maid!
Can the eye wiſh to bar harmonious ſounds
The entrance of the ear? Or is the ear
Deſirous to deprive the eye of ſight?
CHARLOTTE, whoſe happyneſs depends on mine;
Can never join to wreck her FREEMAN's heart.

Mrs.

Mrs. FREEMAN.

How may the folly of a moment loſe
What can not be recover'd in an age!
What miſerys have I brought upon myſelf!

Y. FREEMAN.

Hark! is not that the charmer's voice afar,
That crys, come FREEMAN, haſte to reſcue me,
And ſnatch me from the ſnares which now ſurround me!
I come, O! nymph divine, to ſeize my right,
Reſolv'd to bear away my lovely prize,
Or periſh in th' attempt.

(*As he goes towards the door* CHARLOTTE *enters.*

SCENE VI.

Young FREEMAN.

Ah! is the cloud that hover'd o'er my head
So ſoon diſpers'd! It is;
And the gay ſun breaks brighter on my eye.
See! the dear angel of my comfort comes!
Say, heav'nly fair, tell me, thou faithful bride,
By what aſſiſting pow'r you broke the toils
Which my foes pitch'd for you, and ſhun'd their hands
To find your conſtant and your tender mate?

CHARLOTTE.

I wanted, and I ſought, no pow'r but love
To guide me to you: ſoon as I ſaw
We cou'd not change my father's reſolution
To tare me from you, I conceal'd myſelf,
Waiting till night had ſpread her friendly ſhade
That unobſerv'd I might eſcape, and fly
To you for ſuccour; which if you deny me,
I have no refuge but in death. Your gentle father,
when I enter'd his hoſpitable gate, met me and took

me kindly by the hand, and with a tender ſmile ſay'd, welcome thou lovely gueſt, go in, and find one that will give you as much comfort as you bring to him.

Y. FREEMAN.

Yes,
You ſhall find comfort and a welcome here:
I'll be the caſtle of my love's defence;
My father and my mother both ſhall join
To guard the outworks; and no pow'r on earth
Shall force you from me.

Mrs. FREEMAN.

Excuſe my child what yeſterday you hear'd.
Fall from my tongue; and believe that heaven cou'd not ſend
A gueſt more welcome to me than yourſelf.

SCENE VII.

FREEMAN enters with a letter in his hand.

FREEMAN ſenr.

Hail happy pair;
And may your days be many in the land,
And ev'ry day be happyer than the laſt.
The ſtorm that held ye from the wiſh'd-for ſhore
Is lay'd, and an unruffled calm ſucceeds.

Y. FREEMAN.

Bleſs'd as I am, I'm ſure my father brings
Some heav'nly tydings to enhance my joy.

CHARLOTTE.

As from a Night paſs'd in uneaſy dreams,
I ſee the dawning of a cheerful morn.

FREEMAN ſenr.

Here, LEWIS, take and read it to your wife;
And pour into her ear a balm that ſoon

Will

Will reach her tender heart, and cure what pains
May ſtill be lurking there.

Young FREEMAN reads the letter.

SIR,

THE ills of fortune, and the reaſonable perſuaſions of the beſt of wives, joined with the warmeſt affection for my daughter, have brought me to a juſt ſenſe of my error in oppoſing a match on which alone depends the felicity of my dear child. I do not preſume to make any propoſals: I give her to you and your family: and I ſhall give myſelf contented to the grave, whenever my days are expired, being ſatisfyed that I have made her happy by this laſt act of mine. My heart is now diveſted of all enmity to you: may your happyneſs encreaſe with your years, whatever is the future lot of

Your humble ſervant

BRIAR.

CHARLOTTE looks into the letter.

'Tis my dear father's hand, and bleſſings on him! I know he always lov'd me; and by this act he has convinc'd me that I'm the firſt in his affection, when his cool judgement ſways. Excuſe my tears; for they are tears of joy.

Y. FREEMAN.

My CHARLOTTE,
See the big tear hangs on your FREEMAN's eye,
This unexpected change in your father
Commands my admiration and my love;
I'm reſtleſs till I claſp him to my breaſt,
And let him know how much he ſhares my heart.

FREEMAN ſenr.

I'll riſe to-morrow with the ſun, and pay
An early viſit to my brother,
And greet him truly with a brother's love:
The ills of fortune

Which he complains of I will ſoon remove:
I will prevail on him, and on his wife,
That fair example of connubial love,
To come and paſs the joyful day with us.
The merry bells ſhall wake the cheerful morn,
And call the neighbours round to FREEMAN's hall;
There ſhall they feaſt, and quaff the plenteous juice,
Wiſhing the lovely bride and bridegroom joy.
My wife and I will, with unſparing hands,
Attend our welcome gueſts, and let no want
Of nuptial merryment diſgrace the day.

Mrs. FREEMAN.

A grateful office has my huſband choſe
For his obedient wife, whoſe ev'ry day
Of all my life to come ſhall ſhew my children
That I've no happyneſs without their love.

Y. FREEMAN.

Now, CHARLOTTE, thou art mine, and I am thine,
By ev'ry ty of duty and of love.
What to our parents do we owe? Our lives,
And what's more precious, that our lives are bleſs'd.

When o'er the ſpacious globe my eyes I throw,
And view the various ſons of pow'r below,
Or him in *Pekin*'s walls, where wiſdom guides,
Who o'er unnumber'd tribes in peace preſides,
Or him at *Iſpahan* who proudly reigns
O'er gaudy millions and extended plains,
Or him for whom the ſun intenſely ſhines,
And ripens for his pride the di'mond mines,
The great *Mogul*,——or mighty *Othman*'s ſtate,
On which a thouſand eaſtern beautys wait,
I wou'd not change, to be of all poſſeſs'd,
The lovelyer empire of my CHARLOTTE's breaſt.

The End of the third ACT.

ACT

ACT IV. SCENE I.

A *Garden.*

Young FREEMAN and CHARLOTTE.

Y. FREEMAN.

This morning's ſun ſhines on the happyeſt huſband
That ever yet poſſeſs'd a lovely bride.
The author of our beings and our joys
Gave us a taſte of paradiſe to come
In the rich tranſports of the bridal night.
Behold, my love, the ſplendid eye of day
Looks o'er the hills in brightneſs all aray'd,
While at our feet the flow'rs ſend up their ſweets,
And ev'ry tree, and buſh, is melody,
As if all nature hail'd us to our bliſs.

CHARLOTTE.

I'm ſurely bleſs'd beyond the lot of wives:
I cou'd ſay much upon our happy ſtate;
But you have ſpoke; yet all that you have ſay'd
Falls ſhort of my conception of my happyneſs.

Y. FREEMAN.

Hide not a bluſh, a bluſh the morning wears.
With what delight I feaſt my raviſh'd eyes,
While ev'ry touch fills all my veins with pleaſure!

CHARLOTTE.

I've not a want, my deareſt FREEMAN, now,
But my poor mother's and my father's ſmiles;
Which I ſhall ſoon behold; for your good father
Went early out to ſeek the wiſh'd-for gueſts,
And bring them hither.

Young

Y. FREEMAN.

Swift ye minutes run,
And give to my embrace that honour'd pair,
To whom I owe the ſpring of all my joys!
In this dear boſom of unrifled ſweets
Is all the treaſure of my ſoul repos'd.

SCENE II.

WELDON enters.

WELDON.

There ſtands a friend, ſo much he ſhares my heart,
Whoſe peace I value equal to my own;
Yet muſt his ears receive a tale from me
That to his early joys
Will prove like blightings to the budding flow'rs:
But 'tis a tale that, if I ſhou'd not tell it,
He ſoon muſt hear from a leſs friendly voice:
And tho it may 'e're long ſeem ſtrange that I
Shou'd chuſe to be the bearer of the news,
Yet 'tis an office that becomes me well,
Becauſe I ſhall,
With the ſame hand with which I give the wound,
Pour in a balm to mitigate the pain. (*To himſelf.*
Joy to my FREEMAN and his charming bride;
And much I wiſh that I cou'd give ye both
More comfort than I bring.

Y. FREEMAN.

Welcome the dear companion of my youth,
My much lov'd WELDON: thou art come, my friend,
To ſhare
And to encreaſe the pleaſures of the day.
Thus plac'd betwixt ye, I've the beſt reward
That honour can expect,

Friendſhip

Friendſhip in one hand, in the other love:
But, methinks, my friend,
You wear a ſadneſs in your countenance,
That ſuits the preſent hour but ill.

WELDON.

I've at my heart
A burden that I muſt unload to you,
And you alone: and, tho the ſeaſon
Seems but ill choſen for a taſk like this,
It muſt not be delay'd.
Forgive me, heav'nly bride, if I exact
From you what hard neceſſity requires,
And from your ſide,
For ſome few moments, take your faithful mate.

Y. FREEMAN.

Go in, my love; and there expect me ſoon;
Thou beauty that art always in my eye!

CHARLOTTE.

Whate'er my beauty is, my only pride
Is plac'd in my obedience and my love. (*She goes.*

SCENE III.

WELDON.

FREEMAN, we've long been friends; and, when at college,
We have often turn'd
Together o'er the philoſophic page;
Thence have we learn'd that true philoſophy
Conſiſts in bearing ills inevitable
With the ſame patience as we'd view a ſtorm,
Or hurricane,
Which are not in our pow'r to ſtop or lay.

Y. FREEMAN.

So well I know my friend that I am ſure
He wou'd not bring a trifle to my ear

Prepar'd

Prepar'd with ſuch ſolemnity as this.
Speak what you have to ſay; I am reſign'd.

WELDON.

I'm glad you are; for you have much to bear.

Y. FREEMAN.

What can affect my peace? My CHARLOTTE's well,
And ſhe is mine;
My father, and my mother, all are well:
As for our goods of fortune, were they leſs
Than what they are, they'd be enough for me:
But hold, I now begin to doubt my pow'r:
If the ſad ſtory that you have to tell
Is of the ſorrows which you bear yourſelf,
I ſhall break in
Upon the joys which I propos'd to day,
And mix my griefs with thine.

WELDON.

I've giv'n that advice I ſcarce can take.
Your tenderneſs for me makes me already
Anticipate the anguiſh to myſelf
Which you too ſoon muſt feel:
However, reſolve to bear it like a man;
And be ſure I will not leave you
In the diſtreſs with which I ſhall o'erwhelm you,
But keep a ſtretch'd out hand,
Till I have pull'd you out, or ſunk with you.
Stand firm; be ready for the ſtroke.

Y. FREEMAN.

I am
You ſee a ſturdy oak that well will bear
The buffetings of the contending winds.

WELDON.

Within this hour
I ſaw your father ſeiz'd, and haul'd to jail.

Y. FREEMAN.

At that I'm more ſurpris'd than terrify'd:
The action muſt be forg'd, he's not in debt;
Nor is his credit ſo low, or he ſo little lov'd, as to be unable to procure him bail.

WELDON.

This is but as a gale that only moves
The leaves, and has not force to ſhake them off:
This you bear well; and, as the winds ariſe,
Keep ſteady as the oak, and fortify
Your mind with reſolution.——The charge againſt your father is no leſs than murder.

Y. FREEMAN.

He never cou'd delight in blood, but rather wou'd ſpill his own to ſave another's: yet, go on, and tell me who's the murder'd perſon.

WELDON.

Give me your hand; and ſtand againſt this blaſt,
And you may bear the reſt.——Your CHARLOTTE's father is dead.

Y. FREEMAN.

Murder'd by whom? not by my father; for, ſince your arbitration of the difference betwixt them, they were friends,
And by the ſtricteſt bonds which cou'd be bound:
There's in our familys ſo great a change,
That all our hearts are one. I have ſome hopes
That the report of BRIAR's death is falſe:
How hear'd you it?

WELDON.

I ſaw him breathleſs, and beſmear'd with blood,
And ſaw your father, after he was ſeiz'd,
And hear'd the charge againſt him,
With ev'ry circumſtance attending it.

Y. FREEMAN.

Let me lay my hand upon your friendly arm; and tell me each particular of this myſterious melancholly tale.

WELDON.

BRIAR was found,
In his own fields, dead and beſmear'd with blood,
And in his ſide a wound, your father by him,
And in his hand the ſtaff that gave the blow,
The iron ſpike at the ſharp end of which
Was cover'd o'er with blood, and, as they try'd,
Exactly fill'd the wound.

Y. FREEMAN.

This is like thunder from the hand of heaven;
And I muſt yield to it. (*He ſinks down.*

WELDON.

Riſe, my friend; and tho my words may ſeem at preſent like a face that's veil'd, yet credit what I ſay: BRIAR indeed can never be reſtor'd; but your father, tho he muſt thro a heavy ſuffering paſs, ſhall, like a veſſel in a dreadful ſtorm expected long to ſink, ſafe reach the land at laſt.

Y. FREEMAN.

That's ſome relief to my dejected ſoul;
But BRIAR is no more; and that's enough
To heap on us intolerable woes:
But tell me, WELDON, make me, if you can,
Sure that my father's life is not in danger.

WELDON.

I have conceiv'd how I can ſafe that life;
And reſt aſſur'd, if one of us muſt ſink,
'Tis I'll be drown'd: enquire no farther of me.

Y. FREEMAN.

My truſt is all in you; yet I foreſee
The remedy itſelf muſt be ſevere.

SCENE

SCENE IV.

Mrs. FREEMAN enters.

Mrs. FREEMAN.

Was ever pleaſant morn o'ercaſt like this!
O! my lov'd ſon, for much expected joy,
Aray yourſelf with ſadneſs and deſpair.
I have receiv'd
Such fatal tydings as I dread to tell.

Y. FREEMAN

They have already reach'd my ear, and pierc'd
My heart: but I've a friend
Who, while he plung'd me in a ſea of woe,
Lifted my up, and bad me cheriſh hope;
And, like the wretch juſt ready to be drown'd,
I'm glad to catch at any twig that offers.
Madam retire, and leave to us to guide
The ſhipwreck'd bark thro ſuch a ſtorm as this.
What comfort I can bring you
My honour'd mother may be ſure I'll give.

Mrs. FREEMAN.

Talk not to me of comfort; I'll have none;
For none do I deſerve. O! cou'd I but recall the hour in which my pride drove me to BRIAR's houſe, contented I'd meet death in any form; for my fears tell me that the viſit, which then I made, may be the ſecret ſpring of all
The miſerys in which we're now involv'd.
O! look not on me with an eye of love!
For your raſh mother merits all your hate:
But you may ſpare reproaches; for my thoughts
Are ſcorpions to me; and my burning brain
Almoſt deprives me of the pow'r of thinking.

Y. FREEMAN.

Add no freſh griefs
To thoſe which now are ſcarcely to be borne.
O! my poor CHARLOTTE, what haſt thou to feel!

Mrs. FREEMAN.

The torrent has o'erwhelm'd that lovely flow'r;
Which I committed to the care of thoſe
Who will not be unmindful of their charge.

Y. FREEMAN.

That charge be only mine.

SCENE V.

As he is going CHARLOTTE enters.

CHARLOTTE.

Where's FREEMAN? Where's my huſband? Are you here?
Give me my father.——
Is this the joy, is this the paradiſe,
The nuptial boon which, with a thouſand ſighs
And glowing kiſſes, you promis'd me?——What?
Sent you your father out to murder mine?
Know that the wound of which my father dy'd
Has kill'd your wife.

Y. FREEMAN.

O! think that ev'ry tear my CHARLOTTE ſheds
Draws from her FREEMAN's heart the ſanguine drops.

CHARLOTTE.

O! O! *(She leans on him and ſighs.*

Y. FREEMAN.

Yield not, my love,
So much to grief; for ev'ry ſigh you fetch

Flys

Flys to my breaſt, and does the dagger's office.
Sorrows flow on me in too full a tyde;
And much I doubt my pow'r to ſtem the torrent.

WELDON.

Speak comfort to her; for ſhe ſeems to faint.
Remember what you promis'd, that you'd bear
The buffetings of the contending winds.
Summons up all your ſpirits; and diſdain
To droop;
For now's your time moſt to exert the man,
Whoſe bus'neſs is to prop that falling flow'r.

Y. FREEMAN.

Soul of my ſoul, look up, and ſee, in me,
A father, huſband, lover, and a friend.
Heav'n ſurely trys us with afflictions ſoon,
And checks us in the high-day of our blood,
Leſt, with too great ſhare of human bliſs,
We ſhou'd grow wanton, and forget its pow'r.

CHARLOTTE.

Then heaven ſhou'd give us ſtrength to bear a trial ſo ſevere.
When I behold you, when I hear you ſpeak,
I can not think you wou'd be acceſſary
To ſuch an act as curdles all my blood,
And turns me almoſt to a weeping ſtatue.

Y. FREEMAN.

Turn, turn, your eyes on me; and here repoſe
Your ev'ry ſorrow, and your ev'ry care;
For here alone you muſt expect relief.
(*He turns to* WELDON.
With how ill a grace, my friend, I ſtrive to adminiſter comfort,
Who want a comforter ſo much myſelf.

WELDON.

That you ſhall have in me, confide in me.

CHARLOTTE.

CHARLOTTE.

My father! O! my father!

Y. FREEMAN

Your father's death is yet a myſtery
Which to-morrow will unveil.

CHARLOTTE.

To-morrow will not give me back my father:
Methinks I hear him cry, CHARLOTTE, my child,
Fill not the arms of him whoſe barb'rous fire
Imbrued his hand in the ſame blood of which
You was a part: and muſt you be obey'd?
That too is hard:
My FREEMAN is not guilty: O! my heart!

WELDON ſteps betwixt young FREEMAN and CHARLOTTE.

Thus I divide ye, till to-morrow ſhews
On whom the guilt of BRIAR's death muſt fall:
If FREEMAN's innocence appears, then meet,
And make each other's happyneſs your care;
But, if he's guilty, ſever'd then remain
For ever.

Y. FREEMAN.

Hold; that is unfriendly urg'd: the terms are too ſevere: the guiltleſs for the guilty muſt not ſuffer; that is repugnant to nature's laws and ev'ry rule of right.

CHARLOTTE.

Ah! FREEMAN, is it ſo? Then much I fear
I've took my leave of joy.

WELDON.

Oppoſe not my propoſals; truſt thy friend,
Who will uſe evr'y honeſt art to heal
Your wounds, and to emerge ye from diſtreſs.
(*Aſide to* FREEMAN.
I'm going now
Upon a work that to the world will ſhew
My ſenſe of honour, juſtice, and of truth:

To-

To-morrow ye ſhall ſee me here again,
If rightly I preſage, a welcome gueſt.

Y. FREEMAN.

I yield to the conditions: only this,
After I've viſited my unhappy father,
Let me watch her ſlumbers if ſhe ſleeps,
Or, if her griefs deny her eyelids reſt,
Let me near her, leſt, in the abſence of her reaſon, ſhe may commit ſome violence on the lovelyeſt frame that beauty e'er was caſt in.——Let me inteat my mother to be mindful of herſelf, and to extend her care to the dear idol of my eyes and ſoul, while I am abſent here: expect my quick return; which, I hope, will be more joyful than this parting is.

Farewel, my love; long may I call thee mine;
For I've no life but what is wrap'd in thine.

The End of the Fourth ACT.

ACT V. SCENE I.

FREEMAN'S *Houſe.*

CHARLOTTE ſleeping, and Young FREEMAN by her.

Y. FREEMAN.

IF there are miniſters of heav'n to guard
The innocent, and virtue is their care,
Here let them take their charge:
From your cœleſtial citadels deſcend,
And from her ſeat of thought
Drive ev'ry image of affliction; there
Let no appearances admittance gain
But what are fruitful of delight; to her mind's eye
Shew the fair proſpect of our future loves;
And let no traces of her former griefs
Be lurking there; but let her wake to joy.
She ſmiles; and on her lips a thouſand beautys ſit.
(He kiſſes her.
Was ever kiſs ſo ſweet!

CHARLOTTE.

My FREEMAN and my father hand in hand!
Then they are friends.
Alas! where am I, or where have I been?

Y. FREEMAN.

You're with your huſband, you're with him to whom
You've plighted everlaſting truth and love,
With him who ne'er can entertain a wiſh
That is repugnant to your own deſires.

CHARLOTTE.

CHARLOTTE.

O! what deluſive viſions round me play'd,
Which plac'd before my eyes my loving father!
My ſlumbers flatter'd me with happyneſs;
They clos'd my ſenſes, which were tir'd with ſorrow,
And plac'd before me images of joy;
But, now awak'd from the fallacious dream,
I find myſelf again a fatherleſs child,
Left with my weeping mother, to bemoan
A parent murder'd by my huſband's ſire.

Y. FREEMAN.

Soul of my ſoul, wound not my ears and heart
With your reflections on my injur'd father:
I have been with him,
And have exhauſted almoſt all my tears
Over his ſufferings: he's innocent,
Tho ſtrong the evidence againſt him;
And if he dys, he dys for an offence
Which he cou'd ne'er commit:
But what his fate is we ſhall know 'e're-long.

CHARLOTTE.

If he is innocent, forbid it, heav'n,
That he ſhou'd ſuffer more:
But, innocent or not, ſo ſtrong I find
Is the affection of my heart to FREEMAN,
I wou'd endeavour, if I ſurvive this ſhock, to admit of joy,
That I may be the cauſe of joy to you.

Y. FREEMAN.

Then all the ſtudy of my days to come
Shall be to grow ſuperior in my love:
Yes, I will ſtretch invention to contrive
Variety of pleaſures for my bride;
For ev'ry day ſhall, like the bridal day,
Witneſs to my extravagance of fondneſs.

SCENE II.

Mrs. FREEMAN enters.

Mrs. FREEMAN.

If I've offended, if my guilt is great,
The meaſure of my ſuff'rings ſure is full.

Y. FREEMAN.

Well have I ſtood the tempeſt yet;
But much I dread the bolt that's coming now.

Mrs. FREEMAN.

Hot as it is, you muſt receive it——

Y. FREEMAN.

O! ſtay;
And if my father's dead, or ſoon to dy,
Suſpend a while the terrible account,
That I may put the choiceſt armour on
That reaſon can afford; for much I fear,
Tho lay'd on CHARLOTTE's breaſt, and prop'd by love,
The words which bring the tydings of his death
Will, like the ball from an unerring hand
That ſtops the flying dove, lay me as breathleſs down.

CHARLOTTE.

Avert it, heav'n, whate'er it is that may
Affect my huſband's life, or health; and blaſt
His wife with ruin, ſo you ſave but him.

Y. FREEMAN.

Thou angel, O! thou goddeſs of my fate,
You've offer'd to lay down too vaſt a price
For ſuch a life as mine.

Did

Did ever marry'd ſtate begin like this!
Yet, I will live, if I can live, for thee.

Mrs. FREEMAN.

My deareſt ſon,
Long may you live, and weather thro the ſtorm;
And may your joys be many,
And laſting all, when I am lay'd in duſt:
You've bus'neſs here with life, but I have none.

Y. FREEMAN.

O! WELDON! O! my friend!
Where's the aſſiſtance that you promis'd me?

Mrs. FREEMAN.

The melancholly news which now I bring
Relate not to your father.
The virtuous matron's dead; the weight of grief
Preſſing too faſt upon her
Has ſtop'd her ſprings of life; and ſhe's no more.

Y. FREEMAN.

Who is no more?

Mrs. FREEMAN.

Your CHARLOTTE's mother.

(CHARLOTTE *faints.*

Y. FREEMAN.

She ſinks, ſhe faints; and if the angel's fled
To her original heaven,
I've nothing more to manage here on earth.

(*Turning to Mrs.* FREEMAN.

This is a tale you ſhou'd have told to me,
That at a proper ſeaſon, and with due preparation, it might have reach'd her ear.——
O! CHARLOTTE! O! my wife! hear, hear, the voice
Of him that calls you back to life, to love.——
Her breaſt is cold, her eyes have loſs'd their luſtre;
But her breath's ſweeter than the *Syrian* roſe.
O! charm me with the muſic of thy voice!——

She breathes; and on her lips carnations bloom;
And her eyes cheer me like the morning ſun.

CHARLOTTE.

Who calls me back to life, to wretchedneſs?

Y. FREEMAN.

To life, my ſoul, and love. The greateſt ſhock
That you cou'd dread is over;
And, after ſuch a black and diſmal ſtorm,
The face of heav'n muſt ſoon begin to clear.

CHARLOTTE.

Mine is no common caſe, no vulgar miſery:
A loving father, and the tendereſt mother
That ever child was bleſs'd with, gone, and for ever loſs'd!
Who, not diveſted of humanity,
Can ſee my woes with an unpitying eye?
And what daughter,
That has a ſenſe of duty and of love,
Can think of joy,
Or can, in my condition, think of life?
Come death,
O! come, thou friendly everlaſting ſleep,
And cloſe my eyes in night that knows no dawn.

Y. FREEMAN.

Periſh a thouſand worlds rather than you
Shou'd give
Thoſe ſcarcely-taſted beautys to the grave!
'Tis virtue now to live,
To ſave that life which all depends on thine.
You're upon duty now, to which
By nature and by providence you're bound;
Your duty is to ſtrive to live for me;
All the rich treaſure of your love is mine:
The harder your duty is,
The greater is your virtue to obey.

CHARLOTTE.

CHARLOTTE.

If I can live, I need not ſtrive to love.——
O! FREEMAN, take me to your honeſt heart;
And, if I keep the full poſſeſſion there,
Life will be worth my care.
Great is the preſent illneſs of my mind;
And you alone muſt my phyſician be:
Tho ſtrong the pains which have beſieg'd me round,
Your love muſt be the cure of all my woes.

Y. FREEMAN.

Come to this breaſt,
Which has no room for any gueſt but you.
Now witneſs heaven
That I've no thoughts of paradiſe beyond
What my dear CHARLOTTE, what my love, can give:
I have no wiſh but what I wiſh for you:
Wiſh I to live, 'tis that my life may be
Employ'd in tender offices to you:
Wou'd I behold encreaſe of flocks and herds,
'Tis that I wou'd encreaſe my love's fair dow'r:
Have I delight to ſee my garden yield
The faireſt flow'rs which e'er adorn'd the ſpring,
'Tis that they may adorn a fairer flow'r:
Do I hope
To ſee my fruit-trees bending with their weight,
'Tis that I may prepare a grateful feaſt,
And to the cheerful banquet call my love.

Whate'er I wiſh to have, or wiſh to be,
'Tis to improve thy bliſs, and merit thee.

SCENE

SCENE III.

The Scene changes.

The COURT ſitting, the JUDGE, the JURY, WITNESSES, FREEMAN ſenr. at the bar, and WELDON foreman of the JURY.

JUDGE.

Ye hear the charge againſt him.
Seven witneſſes of reputation here
Swear that they found him ſtriding o'er the dead,
And in his hand a ſtaff, whoſe bloody point
Exactly fill'd the wound, freſh bleeding then:
Add to this circumſtance, which ſeems to me
No leſs than demonſtration of his guilt,
The long diſſention which has been betwixt them.
From what we've hear'd we muſt our judgement paſs;
In mine he's guilty; but the ſentence reſts
In you
The arbitrators of his life or death:
You, who are foremoſt of the jury, ſpeak.

WELDON.

He's innocent.

JUDGE.

Is that the voice of all?

WELDON.

I ſpeak the voice of all.

JUDGE.

Now, by the ſacred majeſty of heav'n,
That ſees and judges all, the blood of him,

Our

Our fellow ſubject, that was foully murder'd,
Crys loud for juſtice; blood for blood repay:
In him the king, his wife, and only child,
Have loſs'd a ſubject, huſband, and a father:
The king, his wife, and child, of you demand
That juſtice ſhou'd be executed here.
Think ye the poor unhappy man that fell,
Becauſe he wanted riches, has no friend?
Yes, he ſhall find a friend, as well as he
Whoſe wealth perhaps procur'd him friends in you.

WELDON.

Hear, me raſh judge; nor ſtigmatiſe the names
Of ſuch as ſcorn a bribe as much as you.
Give me your promiſe that his life's ſecure,
And I'll produce in court the man that kill'd him;
Nor do I aſk that promiſe but on terms
Which you may grant with honour.
If it appears that he who kill'd him did it
Neither in wrath, nor with his will's conſent,
But in his own defence, your promiſe ſtands.

JUDGE.

I freely give it; and be heaven's high judge
My witneſs.

WELDON.

I am the man.

JUDGE.

Bold and intrepid!—Quick proceed to eaſe
Th' aſtoniſh'd court, that's full of expectation.

WELDON.

Behold in me
The man that kill'd him, but no murderer.

JUDGE.

Now to the fact.

WELDON.

Tho my mind is ſhock'd
At the remembrance of the fatal deed,
And gladly wou'd avoid th' unpleaſing tale,
Yet, in regard to truth and my fair name,
I will begin.——Early in the morning,
As my cuſtom is, I walk'd o'er BRIAR's grounds,
And met him unexpected in my way:
I took occaſion then to talk to him
Of an account that has been long betwixt us:
As our diſpute grew high, I thought he us'd
A language too ingrateful to the man
Who had been a patient creditor ſo long:
Indeed he did provoke me, by his ungentle uſage,
To treat him with more warmth than ever yet
I treated any man,
And to reproach him with ſeverity:
Th' unhappy man, impatient of rebuke,
With all the force of his uplifted arm,
Struck on my temples with an oaken ſtaff:
With my ſuperior ſtrength the ſtick I wreſted from him,
And, ſmarting with the blow, drove at his ſide;
When ſuddenly he fell, and with a groan
Cry'd, *I've deſerv'd my death*, and ſpoke no more:
Aſtoniſh'd at the blood which flow'd from him,
I view'd the ſtaff; at the ſmall end of which
Was a ſharp iron ſpike, which had before
Eſcap'd my eye.
I look'd around; and ſeeing no one near,
I walk'd away,
And ſighing thought the poor illfated man
Had too ſeverely pay'd the debt he ow'd me.
My ſorrows with my ſtory ſo encreaſe,
I beg a reſpite here.——My friend can beſt
Relate what happen'd next,
When, walking o'er the field, he found him dead.

JUDGE.

JUDGE.

Th' almighty judge knows how my ſoul rejoices
At this our clearing of the innocent.
Take up the thread of this ſurpriſing tale;
(*To* FREEMAN *ſenr.*
And baulk not our attention with delay.

FREEMAN ſenr.

Gay and as joyful as the ſun I went
To aſk th' unhappy man, that's dead, to come
To my ſon's wedding feaſt; but, as I croſs'd
The field, I ſaw him lying on the ground:
Then down I lay'd my ſtaff to raiſe him up;
But, to my vaſt ſurpriſe, I found him dead:
Griev'd and confus'd, ſcarce knowing what I did,
Inſtead of my own ſtaff, I took up his:
Theſe neighbours paſſing by, and ſeeing us
In this condition, ſeiz'd me as his murderer:
They hurry'd me before a magiſtrate,
And then to jail.—WELDON, my worthy friend,
As he beſt knows
What follow'd, he can beſt purſue the tale.

JUDGE.

In conſcious virtue bold, as you begun,
Conclude, in your own innocence ſecure.
(*To* WELDON.

WELDON.

From the firſt moment that I ſaw him ſeiz'd,
I was reſolv'd to reſcue him from death,
E'en if I dy'd myſelf.———The tryal being near, my
firſt endeavours were to be of the jury: how in that
office I've diſcharg'd my truſt, ye've ſeen.

JUDGE.

An office that requires the pureſt mind!
They whom their country chuſe for ſuch a truſt,
Upon whoſe verdict, as on fate, depend
Our propertys, our lives, and libertys,

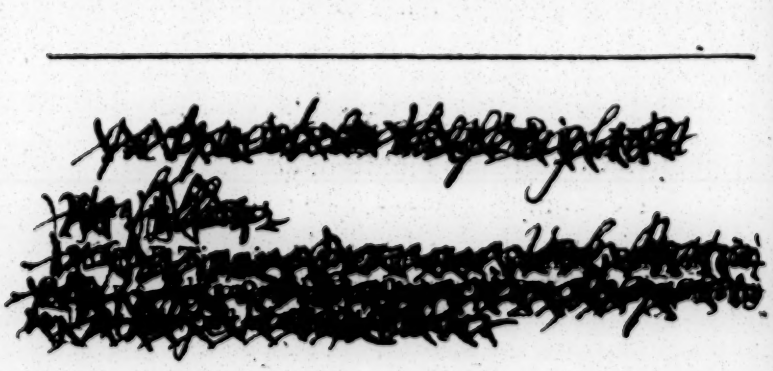
Shou'd bring with them
An ear that's deaf to the deceiver's voice,
A breaſt untainted, and a hand unſtain'd:
And he that fills the ſolemn judgement-ſeat
Shou'd not too raſhly paſs the dreadful ſentence
On the accus'd from circumſtances only:

Better that twenty ſhou'd eſcape the laws
Than one ſhou'd ſuffer in a wrongful cauſe.

The E N D.

Errors of the Preſs.

Act the firſt, Scene the laſt, Verſe the laſt but three, for *Lovers*, with a Comma, read *Lovers'*. Act the fourth, Scene the fourth, Verſe the ninth, for *my*, read *me*.



THE

THE

EPILOGUE.

TO mark a GEORGE's *reign, this wond'rous age*
Abounds in ſchiſms both in the church and ſtage:
They who are born to taſte with pleaſure throng
To SHAKESPEAR's *ſenſe, or* FARINELLO's *ſong:*
The taſteleſs vulgar, as experience tells,
Warmly eſpouſe their HARLEQUINS *and* NELLS.
As great the difference in the church is ſeen,
Where WESLEY * *is, and* WHITEFIELD * *Har-*
(lequin:

* In the reign of king GEORGE the *Second* theſe men pretended to a New Birth, and called themſelves and their followers *Methodiſts:* they were too mean, and ignorant, to be taken notice of but for the concourſe of idle low people, whom they drew from their buſyneſs and care of their familys. The conſequence of their nonſenſical doctrine, if put in practice, would have been a total neglect of trade and commerce, and men muſt have turned out to graze on the common. The diſcerning part of mankind were divided in their opinions of theſe people, whether they were only fools, or fools and knaves; for they raiſed contributions from their followers for pretended charitys abroad; and odd ſtorys were told of their prevailing on many weak perſons, wives, and ſervants, to aduance them money for charitable uſes, not regarding how thoſe wives and ſervants got that money. They were regularly ordained, but were prohibited preaching in the churches; and they afterwards tumultuouſly aſſembled in lanes, fields, commons, and the highways. This note is neceſſary, becauſe it is almoſt impoſſible that the names of theſe men ſhould be known many years hence.

For

The EPILOGUE.

For them the ſhuttle's left by lazy weavers;
And butchers drop their marrow-bones and cleavers;
And, while the weaver's wife forſakes the loom,
SUSAN *leaves half unmop'd the dining-room:*
Theſe are the dregs, the rubbiſh, of mankind,
Sightleſs themſelves, and guided by the blind,
Strangers to virtue, as unknown to ſchools:
As ev'ry like its like, *fools cheriſh fools.*

While we behold the juſt and prudent train
In the fair temples which the laws ordain,
Where BERRIMAN, *or* DENNE, *or* TERRICK, *preach*
What well becomes the good and wiſe to teach,
The rabble herd (to novelty and fear
Eternal ſlaves) to Kennington * *repair:*
'Tis there the human hogs on offal feed,
And cripples lean upon a broken reed.

* WHITEFIELD frequently preached on *Kennington* common.